

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5902

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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DEPT PLEASE PASS TO DOT/US COAST GUARD AND EPA FOR F.

ALLEN HARRIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CCMS, SENV

SUBJ: CCMS: PILOT STUDY PROPOSED BY FRANCE ON CONTROL OF POLLUTION
OF THE SEAS

REF: PARIS 2591

SECRETARIAT HAS JUST DISTRIBUTED DRAFT FRENCH PROPOSAL
(AC/274-WP/4) PROVIDED BY FRENCH NATO DEL AS WORKING PAPER FOR
EXPERTS MEETING SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1976,
AT 9:30 A.M. AT MFA, 37 QUAI D'ORSAY, ROOM 524, PARIS 7E.
PAPER AMPLIFIES ON EARLIER FRENCH DRAFT OUTLINE (AC/274-WP/3).

BEGIN TEXT

THE POLLUTION OF THE SEAS IS GENERALLY LINKED TO THE
ARTIFICIAL DUMPING IN THE ENVIORNMENT OF POLLUTING AGENTS

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RESULTING FROM FIRSTLY, TRANSPORT ACTIVITIES AND THE
EXPLOITATION OF THE SEABED, SECONDLY, WASTE OR DEPOSITS
ON THE COAST AND THIRDLY, THE FLOW TO THE SEA OF POLLUTING

ELEMENTS WASHED DOWN BY RUNNING WATER AND RIVERS OR PRECIPITATED FROM ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION.

TO CONTROL THIS POLLUTION, ADMINISTRATIONS AND BODIES CONCERNED WITH PROTECTING THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT HAVE SET UP A NUMBER OF BODIES TO PLAN AND IMPLEMENT CONTROL AND SUPERVISORY OPERATIONS INCLUDING MEASURES INVOLVING, IN PARTICULAR, THE USE OF TELEDETECTION TECHNIQUES.

THIS INVESTIGATION EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN USED EFFECTIVELY FOR NUMEROUS PURPOSES INCLUDING THE DRIVE TO CLEAR UP POLLUTION RESULTING FROM THE ACCIDENTAL OR DELIBERATE SPILLS OF POLLUTING SUBSTANCES OF WHICH OIL HEADS THE LIST.

THE TECHNIQUES NORMALLY USED RELY, HOWEVER, ON A LIMITED RANGE OF THE ELECTROMAGNETIC SPECTRUM: NEAR AND MEDIUM INFRA-RED.

FROM THE SUBSTANTIAL BODY OF WORK DONE, IN PARTICULAR, IN MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE USE OF TELEDETECTION COULD BE CONSIDERABLY INCREASED IF THE FIELD OF INVESTIGATION WERE TO BE EXTENDED OVER THE WHOLE RANGE OF THE ELECTROMAGNETIC SPECTRUM.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PILOT STUDY, THEREFORE, IS TO REPORT ON THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN TELEDETECTION TECHNIQUES APPLIED TO THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT (EXCLUDING SATELLITES) IN ALL MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE AND, IF NECESSARY, TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON THE FUTURE LINES TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE FOLLOWING SPECIAL FIELDS:

(1) OPERATIONS CONCERNED WITH THE DETECTION OF WASTE AND OIL SPILLS AT SEA

(A) THE OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS SET UP IN THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES USE INFRA-RED SENSORS WHOSE FIELD OF OPERATION IS LARGELY LIMITED BY WEATHER CONDITIONS: FOG, CLOUD AND THE STATE OF THE SEA.

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TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM EFFECTIVENESS HOWEVER, THESE SYSTEMS MUST REMAIN OPERATIONAL IRRESPECTIVE OF THE WEATHER CONDITIONS.

IT WOULD SEEM RELEVANT THEREFORE TO LOOK AT THE DETECTION METHODS AND TECHNIQUES THAT WOULD MEET THIS REQUIREMENT IN THAT THEY ARE ALMOST WHOLLY INDEPENDENT OF ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS.

(B) THERE ARE TIMES WHEN IT MIGHT BE ESSENTIAL TO KNOW THE THICKNESS OF THE OIL SLICK ON THE SURFACE OF THE SEA, FOR EXAMPLE WHEN THERE IS A DANGER OF POLLUTION BEING WASHED

UP ON THE COAST OR WHEN POLLUTION HAS TO BE TREATED EITHER MECHANICALLY OR BY DISPERSING AGENTS.

ACCORDINGLY, ALL-WEATHER METHODS AND TECHNIQUES FOR MEASURING THE THICKNESS OF SLICKS IS ESSENTIAL TO THE CONTROL OF POLLUTION.

(C) CURRENT OPERATIONS ARE BEING FURTHER COMPLICATED BY THE NEED FOR THE AUTHORITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPERVISING THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT TO ESTABLISH RESPONSIBILITY FOR ILLICIT TANKER SPILLS.

APART FROM PHOTOGRAPHIC OR THERMOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE, THIS INVOLVES TAKING SAMPLES FROM THE WAKE OF SHIPS SUSPECTED OF ILLICIT SPILLS IN ORDER, IN PARTICULAR, TO ESTABLISH OFFICIALLY THE POLLUTION/LOADING CORRELATION.

THIS PROCEDURE INVOLVES A NUMBER OF OPERATIONAL DIFFICULTIES:

- DIFFICULTY OF KEEPING CRAFT IN A STATE OF PERMANENT READINESS AT SEA FROM WHICH SAMPLES CAN BE TAKEN AT THE PLACE WHERE THE SPILL IS PRESUMED TO HAVE OCCURRED;

- DIFFICULTY OF KEEPING AN AIRCRAFT IN THE AIR ALL THE TIME THE CRAFT ARE PROCEEDING TO THE SPOT, SO THAT IT CAN GUIDE THEM TO THE IRREGULARITY DETECTED;

- POOR REPRESENTATIVENESS OF SAMPLES WHICH, WITH PRESENT TECHNIQUES, CAN ONLY BE APPROXIMATE;

- COMPLEXITY AND SLOWNESS OF THE PROCEDURE FOR ANALYSING THE SAMPLES TAKEN, AS LABORATORY IDENTIFICATION MIGHT REQUIRE

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THE APPLICATION OF SEVERAL ANALYTICAL METHODS.

TO ENSURE, THEREFORE, THAT THE DETECTION OF OIL SPILLS IS CARRIED OUT IN OPTIMUM CONDITIONS, IN ADDITION TO ALL-WEATHER RECORDING EQUIPMENT, IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE ABLE TO HAVE RECOURSE TO TECHNIQUES CAPABLE OF OBTAINING A CLEAR RESPONSE FROM A DISTANCE WHICH WOULD EITHER SETTLE ANY UNCERTAINTIES, OR, WITH THE HELP OF A STANDARD LIST DRAWN UP IN ADVANCE, IDENTIFY THE TYPE OF OIL PRESENT ON THE SURFACE OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT (CRUDE, HEAVY OR LIGHT FUEL OIL...) GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN OF THE PRODUCT.

IT WOULD THEREFORE BE USEFUL TO TAKE STOCK OF THE METHODS AND TECHNIQUES CAPABLE OF IDENTIFYING FROM A DISTANCE THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF OIL SPILLS ON THE SURFACE OF THE SEA.

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(D) QUITE APART FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNIQUES, THE USE OF AN OPERATIONAL CENTRE FOR DIRECTING AND CO-ORDINATING THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST OIL POLLUTION WOULD SEEM TO BE A KEY FACTOR IF THE SYSTEMS WHICH HAVE BEEN SET UP ARE TO BE EFFECTIVE INsofar AS DATA ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLLUTION ARRIVES AT THE OPERATIONAL CENTRE, WITHIN AN EXTREMELY SHORT SPACE OF TIME, IF NOT IMMEDIATELY.

SPECIAL ATTENTION MUST THEREFORE BE GIVEN TO THE METHODS AND TECHNIQUES FOR THE IMMEDIATE TRANSMISSION AND GROUND VISUALISATION OF DATA GATHERED IN FLIGHT FROM AIRBORNE SENSORS.

(2) EVALUATION OF THE INFLUENCE OF FALLOUT OVER THE SEA OF ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION

WORK HAS BEEN DONE WHICH DEMONSTRATES THE EXISTENCE OF SEA POLLUTION BY FALLOUT OF POLLUTANTS DISCHARGED INTO THE ATMOSPHERE OVER THE CONTINENTS AND CARRIED BY WIND, SOMETIMES IN THE FORM OF AEROSOLS, AND SOMETIMES NOT, OVER THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT.

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VERIFICATION OF THESE FINDINGS INVOLVES MEASURING AND MONITORING EQUIPMENT.

STOCK SHOULD THEREFORE BE TAKEN:

(A) OF THE TELEDETECTION METHODS AND TECHNIQUES CAPABLE OF
DETECTING, IDENTIFYING AND MEASURING MAJOR POLLUTANTS
(INCLUDING OIL) PRESENT IN THE ATMOSPHERE;

(B) OF MEASURING METHODS AND TECHNIQUES ON THE GROUND,
FOR CHECKING THE VALIDITY OF THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE MARINE
ENVIRONMENT IS POLLUTED BY ATMOSPHERIC FALLOUT, AND, IF
SO, FOR MEASURING THE EXTENT OF THE LATTER COMPARED WITH OTHER
FORMS OF POLLUTION.

(3) STUDY ON THE COASTAL DISSEMINATION OF POLLUTION

(A) A STUDY OF POLLUTION DRIFT ON THE SURFACE OR IN THE OCEAN
DEPTHS, PARTICULARLY IN COASTAL WATERS, REQUIRES THE ACCURATE
MEASUREMENT OF A NUMBER OF PHYSICAL PARAMETERS: DIRECTION
AND FORCE OF THE WIND, SWELL, CURRENTS, ETC.

FURTHER, CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE SPREAD OF POLLUTANTS IN
THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT FROM POINTS WHERE WASTE IS DUMPED
AND EFFLUENTS FLOW INTO THE SEA ARE STILL IMPERFECTLY UNDERSTOOD.
IN PARTICULAR, THE CHECKING OF MATHEMATICAL OR PHYSICAL MODELS
USED IN FORECASTING THE IMPACT OF WASTE STILL PRESENTS PROBLEMS.

TO HELP OVERCOME THESE DIFFICULTIES, INCLUDING
THOSE INHERENT IN THE MEASURES ALREADY ADOPTED,
TELEDETECTION APPLIED TO KNOWN:

- PHYSICAL PARAMETERS OCCURRING IN MOVEMENTS WHICH AFFECT
POLLUTION;

- POLLUTANT DISPERSION PHENOMENA IN THE MARINE
ENVIRONMENT;

SEEMS A USEFUL INVESTIGATION AND QUANTIFICATION TOOL OF WHICH
IT IS IMPORTANT TO TAKE STOCK.

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(B) AMONG THE WAYS OF HANDLING AND PROCESSING THE
QUANTIFIED DATA COLLECTED, MATHEMATICAL SEA MODELS COULD PROVE
THE MOST USEFUL. UNFORTUNATELY, THE MODELS AT PRESENT
BEING USED, WHICH INCLUDE THE MATHEMATICAL MODEL OF THE NORTH
SEA, ARE ONLY RELIABLE FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF HIGH SEAS
DATA AND THEY LOSE THEIR VALIDITY COMPLETELY WHEN IT COMES
TO HANDLING COASTAL PROBLEMS.

IN THIS LATTER CASE, USE IS GENERALLY MADE OF MATHEMATICAL
MODELS WHICH HAVE A LIMITED GEOGRAPHICAL RANGE.

THE VALIDITY OF COASTAL MATHEMATICAL MODELS SHOULD THEREFORE
BE EXAMINED AND AN ASSESSMENT MADE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF

INTEGRATING THESE MODELS WITH THE GENERAL HIGH SEA MODELS,
IN THE LIGHT OF EXPERIENCE GAINED IN A LARGE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES.

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